



## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GEOMORPHOLOGISTS

NEWSLETTER No. 16 (3/1999)

THE IAG REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON GEOMORPHOLOGY IN RIO DE JANEIRO,  
17–22 JULY 1999

Although the final decision on the conference was made with some delay and, consequently, the organizers had much less than a year for their work, the information on participation (210 abstracts received from 25 countries of five continents) had the promise of a successful meeting.

Certainly, the venue was a major attraction for participants: the 77-year-old Hotel Gloria of great fame, located close to the centre of a city of splendid natural setting, Rio de Janeiro. The event, as it was revealed in the opening address of Professor Selma Costa, president of the Brazilian Geomorphological Union, was an excellent occasion for the members of our young host organization to present their results and make personal acquaintances with geomorphologists in other parts of the world.

The paper sessions on tropical, fluvial and coastal geomorphology, gully development, soils–geomorphology interactions, long-term landscape evolution with special regard to the role of tectonic movements were introduced by a series of excellent plenary lectures by Michael Summerfield, Mike Kirkby, João José Bigarella (a great figure in Brazilian geology) and Thomas Dunne. In the oral sessions a large number of our Brazilian hosts presented their work in English, while the majority of lectures, held in Portuguese, were translated simultaneously by professionals. Many of them provoked short but vivid discussions immediately after the presentation or during the breaks. The poster sessions, where mostly regional studies in various states of the Brazilian federation were shown, were equally interesting. If I might choose, I found the posters related to the geomorphological manifestations of plate tectonics the most intriguing, but others, on climatic influences or human impacts on the environment, were equally carefully prepared, sometimes using advanced techniques of research and presentation.

The other events associated with the conference were an IGU GERTEC Commission meeting and a GCTE symposium on gully erosion. Several business meetings were held in various circles.

A special benefit for participants were the one-day field trips on 22 July (cost included in the registration fee). The options offered were hillslope erosion and landslides in Petropolis, hydrological processes and mass movements in the Tijuca massif, and coastal and structural geomorphology of Rio.

After a successful conference congratulations are due to the main scientific organizer, Dr Nelson Ferreira Fernandes (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), and his colleagues and to the staff of the company responsible for the technical running of the conference, Gauche Eventos. They were always helpful, no matter with what problems we turned to them.

Out of the four post-conference field trips offered, two attracted participants in sufficient number. The four-day one with João José Bigarella and Oscar Fernandes (University of West Parana) led across the state of Parana to the Iguaçu Falls and the largest hydroelectric power plant in the world, the Itaipu Dam.

Comprehensive information could be gained on geology, landform evolution, climate, soils and land use as well as human aspects. Professor Bigarella generously offered a range of his publications as guide-books for the trip.

The other excursion presented tropical geomorphology and Quaternary landscape evolution problems in the Paranaíba do Sul river basin.

The long-planned and now finally realized conference in South America was regarded a success by all participants. It helped the IAG to extend its activities to this continent and to strengthen international co-operation in geomorphological research.

DENES LOCZY

#### IAG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, RIO DE JANEIRO, 16–18 JULY 1999

The IAG Executive Meeting was held in Rio de Janeiro on the occasion of the IAG Regional Conference organized by the Brazilian Geomorphological Union (17–22 July). The meeting was attended by six of the elected Executive Members (O. Slaymaker, M. Panizza, P. Migon, D. Reed, C. Embleton-Hamann, A. Pissart) and three of the co-opted Executive Members (A. Coelho Netto, A. Goudie, Y. Wang).

Discussion was wide-ranging and animated, with an underlying sense of the urgency of careful preparation for the Fifth International Conference on Geomorphology to be held in Tokyo in 2001. In the context of that preparation, there was a strong commitment to improving our contacts with National Delegates. Because the composition of Adhering National Bodies (ANBs) and the names of National Delegates change, in some cases on a yearly basis, and not all ANBs inform the Secretary-General of these changes, communication is inefficient and sometimes ineffective. Not only is there a need to contact National Delegates with the Newsletter and with invoices for membership dues, but in the next two years there will be significant items associated with the Council Meeting to take place in Tokyo. It was therefore decided that we should put more resources into the upgrading of our IAG website. Our current website is managed by W. Locke and forms a part of his larger responsibility of maintaining IAG's news releases on GEOMORPHLIST. Discussions are under way and developments on this item will be reported in forthcoming Newsletters. In the meantime, our Treasurer will be seeking updated information from each National Delegate when she sends out the next invoices.

New initiatives to translate the Newsletter into Chinese, Italian, Russian and Spanish, and to seek publication outlets for the Newsletter in those languages have been taken. With respect to IAG publications, collaborative volumes on facets of global geomorphology, on key areas in geomorphology and on 'great world landscapes' are to be promoted independently from the thematic conference paper collections and the monographs arising from Working Group research collaborations. The continuing major contribution of the flagship geomorphological journals to the IAG was acknowledged and it was reaffirmed that there is neither need nor scope for the IAG to establish its own independent journal.

During discussion of the finances of the Association it was noted that the IAG budget is in a healthy state and that it will be possible for the IAG to offer a limited number of travel support scholarships for young geomorphologists to attend the Congress in Tokyo in 2001. Details of these scholarships will be announced.

Further items discussed included reports of the IAG involvement in various conferences around the world. The President reported that from 11 to 17 April, he had been the guest of Academia Sinica in Taipei, Taiwan. The occasion was organized by Professor J-C. Chang of the Department of Geography at the National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei. He also noted the highly successful meeting on Drainage Basin Dynamics, co-sponsored by IAG, held at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem (22–27 May) and organized by Dr M. Hassan in recognition of the signal contributions of Professor Asher Schick to international geomorphology.

The Vice-President reported on his efforts to organize a 10-day course in Europe entitled an International School on Geomorphological Hazards. The course is reserved for young researchers from less favoured countries in South America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.

Professor Pissart reported on progress with the idea of setting up Jan De Ploey Libraries. The original idea, mooted by Professor Brunsdén, was to ask geomorphologists to send offprints to selected Jan De Ploey Libraries in the South. The emphasis has now moved towards sending books via agencies that have been set up

to send books to libraries in developing countries and also via publishers. Progress was reported by Professor Goudie (anglophone) and Professor Pissart (francophone) towards achieving these goals.

A UNESCO initiative to establish Geoparks (parks of outstanding geoscientific interest) will receive at least one nomination from the IAG.

Finally, it was decided that the next meeting of the IAG Executive Committee will be held in Nanjing, China, on 25 August 2000, on the occasion of the IAG Thematic Conference on Geomorphological Processes and Human Impact in the Monsoon Climate.

PIOTR MIGON AND OLAV SLAYMAKER

#### IAG THEMATIC CONFERENCE: MONSOON CLIMATE, GEOMORPHOLOGIC PROCESSES AND HUMAN ACTIVITIES, NANJING, CHINA, 25–29 AUGUST 2000

In conjunction with the 29th International Geographical Conference in Seoul, an IAG Thematic Conference will be held in Nanjing, China, from 25 to 29 August 2000. The conference will be organized by the Geography Society of China (GSC), Nanjing University and the Institute of Geography of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS).

The main theme of the Conference is: monsoon climate, geomorphologic processes and human activities in Asia and in Pacific regions. Various sessions are being planned, covering the main topics of the discipline. Abstracts of papers and posters should be submitted by 30 December 1999. The official language of the conference will be English and no simultaneous translation will be provided. The registration fee is US \$250 and will cover the conference materials, the welcome reception and the closing lunch. The conference will take place at the Nanjing International Conference Hotel which is located in the picturesque Zhongshanling National Tourist Scenic Region in Nanjing. A standard double room at the Nanjing International Conference Hotel is approximately US \$50 per day.

Pre-conference field trips will be run from 19 to 24 August 2000, all starting at Beijing and finishing in Nanjing. Proposed itineraries are (i) Beijing – Guilin – Nanjing; (ii) Beijing – Tianshan Mt. – Lanzhou – Xian – Nanjing; (iii) Beijing – Chongqing – Changjiang Three Gorges – Nanjing; (iv) Beijing – Jiuzhaigou – Lunan Stone Forest – Nanjing. Three post-conference field trips from 30 August to 1 September 2000 are offered: (i) Nanjing – Zhenjiang – Suzhou – Wuxi Shanghai (Changjiang River delta); (ii) Nanjing – Huangshan Mt. – Qiantang estuary – Hangzhou; (iii) Beijing – Chengdu – Lhasa – Beijing. There will also be a half-day city tour of Nanjing during the conference. Detailed information about the field trips will be published in the Second Circular.

#### *Registration*

The First Circular contains a pre-registration form. Preliminary registration is necessary to receive the Second Circular, which will be distributed in October 1999! If no pre-registration form is available send the following information to the Secretary-General of the conference: your name and title, mailing address, phone, fax, e-mail address. If you want to submit a presentation indicate its format (paper, poster) and provisional title or theme. Contact Prof. Ke X. via e-mail, telecom or post: 2000 IAG Thematic Conference Department of Geo & Ocean Science, Nanjing University, 22 Hankou Road, Nanjing 210093, China. Fax: +86 25 3306387; E-mail: xke@netra.nju.edu.cn

#### NEWS FROM MEMBERS

##### *Report on Canadian Geomorphology Research Group*

In 1998, the Canadian Geomorphology Research Group (CGRG) provided a grant of \$1000 to Dr Dan Smith to improve the CGRG (CANGEORG) listserver, which is operated out of the University of Victoria.

This money matched a grant by the Canadian Geological Foundation, allowing Dr Smith to hire someone to expand and add abstracts to the bibliography. The listserver provides information on CGRG activities and maintains a bibliography of Canadian geomorphological, Quaternary, and environmental geoscience publications, which now has over 10 000 entries.

CGRG's first publication, *A handbook of Geophysical Techniques for Geomorphic and Environmental Research*, was released as Geological Survey of Canada Open File 3731 in April 1999. The report is an expanded and improved version of a manual that Dr. Robert Gilbert and his colleagues prepared for the CGRG workshop at Queen's University in 1997. CGRG members can obtain the manual at a reduced cost.

*Canadian Geomorphology 2000*, a collection of papers showcasing recent, international-calibre research by Canadian geomorphologists, is being prepared for publication in a special issue of the journal *Geomorphology*. The papers are being assembled and edited by Drs Olav Slaymaker and John Clague. The issue will be in print by the 2000 GeoCanada meeting in Calgary. CGRG published newsletters in June 1998, January 1999 and June 1999.

CGRG sponsored a two-day workshop on Geophysical Techniques in Geomorphic Research in Vancouver in March 1999. The workshop was organized by Dr Michael C. Roberts, Simon Fraser University. CGRG was also involved in the CAG Annual Meeting in Lethbridge (June 1999).

CGRG held its 1999 Annual General Meeting at the CANQUA-CGRG conference in Calgary in August. Field trips of interest to geomorphologists were offered to the Canadian Rockies and the western Plains. A CGRG- and GSC-sponsored special session, entitled Geomorphic Response to Climate Variability and Extreme Climate Events: Records, Processes and Models from the Late Quaternary to the 21st century, was organized by Drs Steve Wolfe and Donald Lemmen. CGRG's second J.R. Mackay Award was made at this meeting.

CGRG is also involved in several other approaching meetings, including GeoCanada 2000 in Calgary (May 2000), and AQQUA in Montreal (September 2000, CGRG's Annual General Meeting).

The president of the Canadian Geomorphological Research Group, Dr John J. Clague can be contacted at [Jclague@sfu.ca](mailto:Jclague@sfu.ca) (Phone: +1-604-291-4924) for further information about the CGRG activities.

JOHN J. CLAGUE

### EDITOR'S NOTE

The success of the *IAG Newsletter* depends upon the contributions that we receive. Please assist by sending commentaries, reviews of regional or national meetings and field trips, summaries of issues pertinent to geomorphology, and announcements of future meetings and workshops. Your contributions should be forwarded to C. Embleton-Hamann, Institut für Geographie der Universität Wien, Universitätsstraße 7, A – 1010 Wien, Austria. Fax: (+431) 4277 9486; E-mail: [christine.embleton-hamann@univie.ac.at](mailto:christine.embleton-hamann@univie.ac.at)

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Visit the IAG Web Site at:  
<http://www.homepage.montana.edu/~ueswl/geomorphlist/index.htm>

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